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A BUSINESS MAN'S VIEW ON HOW TO SECURE PERMANENT PEACE AFTER THE WAR

By ROGER W. BABSON

WHEN war was declared the last of July, 1914, the entire business world was greatly shocked. The exchanges were thrown into chaos; prices of commodities and securities crumbled, and a veritable panic took place. By the end of 1914 conditions gradually became adjusted, and by the spring of 1915 most lines of business were back to normal.

Beginning with the summer of 1915 war orders began to appear, and general business entered a second stage of the tragedy. The business men of the country saw that they could obtain huge profits on selling to the Allies. At first these profits came to only a few lines of industry, but gradually they sifted through almost all lines. This has continued up to the present time. Nearly all American business men today, from the rich Wall Street banker to the humble workman, are receiving a greater return than ever before in our history.

Whether or not it is owing to these increased profits I will not say, but certainly we are hearing less about the horrors of the war. The most tragic thing today is that the great majority of our people are becoming callous and almost indifferent to this great struggle abroad. This was especially impressed upon me the other day when I heard the editor of a great newspaper say to one of his assistants:

"Put the soft pedal on war stories. The public is losing its interest. Many of our readers have almost forgotten that there is a war."

Although this is true with the great mass of people, I find, since my recent return from South America, a distinct change in feeling among the keenest business men. We are on the verge of entering the third period of the tragedy. The keen business men, who were first to recover after the shock and take advantage of the foreign opportunities, are now becoming very conservative. They frankly recognize that this war cannot continue much longer without immediate harm to the United States. They realize that ultimately this country must share the loss with Europe. Almost every great banker with whom I have recently talked has entirely changed his position since the optimistic days of last year.

It may be true that these men have made so much money during the past year that they can now afford to be honest and conservative, but I do not think this is the reason for the change. Rather these men have now reached a point where they fully understand the terrible economic destruction going on in Europe and the serious after-results sure to be felt in this country. I have been especially interested in noting the new view which these business men take regarding both the preparedness and the peace movements. Of course, many of the bankers are keenly interested in military preparedness; but many great manufacturers and merchants—especially throughout the central West—are not so keen for military preparedness. They believe in a preparedness which is more fundamental; namely, in removing the economic causes of war.

Briefly, the business man believes that war will be

abolished only when some method is devised for enabling nations to obtain peaceably what they would otherwise secure through an armed conflict. Business men believe that the court at The Hague perhaps tends to keep matters *in statu quo*; and if so, it will never be acceptable to the younger and growing nations. It is claimed that judges almost invariably take the conservative side of every question. Hence the saying: "Possession is nine-tenths of the law." This does not mean that courts are dishonest, but simply that their primary purpose is to keep the peace, rather than to do constructive work. The same applies also to international arbitration. Arbitration in international, as in industrial affairs, is of service in temporarily postponing, and sometimes in permanently avoiding a conflict. Yet arbitration does not remove the cause of the difficulty, and is often of only temporary value.

The most thoughtful bankers, manufacturers, and merchants are agreed that world peace must come as a by-product to changed conditions. In other words, they believe that we cannot expect to secure permanent peace by damming up the stream, but rather that we must provide some other channel through which the stream may flow. The different countries of the world today are in very much the same position as were the thirteen American colonies a hundred and forty-odd years ago. At that time each colony had its army and government, and each was the competitor of the others. Some one conceived the idea of their getting together, and especially that they form a court to settle their difficulties. But there were those among them who were bright enough to see that if the Federal Government had only a court, revolutions would continue, and it would be broken up before many years. Therefore it was suggested that the court should be supplemented by legislative and executive departments. It was further provided that the vote of the different colonies in this Congress and for the executive officers should be apportioned to their respective populations.

This provided machinery whereby any section of the country could, as it might desire, get any law repealed or enacted by getting a majority of votes. As it was necessary that any section must have had a majority of the able-bodied men in order to win with arms, there was, under such a form of government, no object in bringing about an armed revolution. To state it another way, revolutions within nations still take place today as they have in the past, but ballots are used instead of bullets. As we look back upon the history of our country, we may clearly see that our legislative body has acted as a safety valve which has kept the country together and enabled each district to remain quiet with a fair degree of contentment. Furthermore, our common sense tells us that were it not for this legislative body the country would be divided into a dozen different republics today. Simply a court would never have held the conservative and progressive interests together.

Statistics on the population density of different nations show that there are economic causes of war which

must be eliminated before war can be abolished. I will give three examples:

The present so-called "right" each nation has to legislate discriminatory tariff, immigration, and other laws against the interests of other nations, preventing other nations from securing what is righteously due them by virtue of their economic efficiency.

The present necessity that each nation shall independently protect its outlets or trade routes on neutral seas and its colonists in undeveloped lands.

The present lack of centralized inter-nation power for instituting economic reforms in connection with industries, birth rate, working conditions, language, and the like.

Vital statistics clearly teach that, until these economic conditions are changed, leagues of peace and other attempts to hold things as they are will probably be futile.

On the other hand, the law of equal reaction teaches just as clearly that these economic difficulties would eliminate themselves if some nation would only make a start and offer to give up something. Oh, that the United States might take the lead! We can well afford to. Experts are agreed that these economic causes of war could be eliminated by the creation of some sort of economic inter-nation which would control these inter-nation affairs without interfering with matters strictly national. Hence the business man's slogan:

"International Control of International Affairs."

It is generally agreed that such an economic union must have legislative and executive functions as well as judicial, and that each nation's vote therein must be proportional to its self-supporting population. Therefore, instead of endeavoring to hold the world *in statu quo*, we should seek to provide the means whereby nations can secure peacefully what they would otherwise secure through war.

I do not pretend that the economic causes of war are the only causes; but it is hopeful to know that many of the societies working toward the elimination of war have reached the same conclusion as have a large number of business men; namely, that there are real economic causes, and that they can be removed. It is not, however, the function of business men to work out details. This is something for statesmen and experts on international law. Moreover, as readers of this paper know, these details are pretty much worked out.

What is holding up the entire matter is that the creation of a new inter-nation power greater than ourselves would necessarily demand that we give up certain powers that we as a nation now possess. Hence, before much more headway can be made toward permanent world peace, our people must be brought to see that, in the end, it would pay us to yield certain of our "sovereign rights," even though it might mean that we suffer temporary loss.

Hence, business men feel that the most practical and definite work which peace advocates can now do may be defined as follows:

Recognize that there are real economic causes of war which must be eliminated before there can be world peace, and that these causes will be eliminated only as each nation is willing to give up something for the general good.

Teach that, if such is for the general good, there must be an ultimately beneficial reaction to ourselves; that only through economic co-operation with other nations can our own interests finally be fully developed and protected.

In other words, the keenest business men now see that we as nations, classes, and individuals, can permanently

prosper only as we co-operate in some plan which enables others to prosper with us. This is not offered as an idealism, but as an economic fact, based upon the law that all action is followed by equal reaction of the same kind. If we take unfair advantage of others or attempt to handicap the development of others, we are sure ultimately to harm ourselves in the process, while, by extending opportunity and security to others, we in the end benefit ourselves.

At the present time the great majority of people act upon entirely opposite principles. But is not the failure to recognize this truth the real cause of our personal, national, and international difficulties? Furthermore, until we do recognize this truth, can there be much further permanent progress in human relations?

The greatest need of today is to get people to see for themselves this great truth; that the permanent development and security of any individual, class, or nation depend upon the adoption of such co-operative plans as provide for offering more equal opportunity and security to others. The greatest hope of today is in the fact that business men are beginning to see that any plan which includes only themselves is short-sighted and of temporary value, and that economic co-operation offers a solution for both industrial and international difficulties. The establishment of an economic union for the control of the seas, tariffs, immigration laws, and the like, is sure to come.

The business man is recognizing that we need co-operation, financial, industrial, and international. He is learning that the investor, the labor leader, and the diplomat make permanent headway only through sacrifice, only by doing the hard thing which others are not doing; although such a policy does not mean sacrifice in the end, but rather honor, happiness, and profit.

Hence I urge readers of this paper, when talking to the great landowner, to tell him that his strength depends upon dividing up his land and selling small blocks to others, rather than upon accumulating it. The law of equal reaction teaches that only by making each citizen the owner of his own little place can men be made conservative. In talking to bankers and capitalists, explain that their security depends more upon sharing their profits with others than upon building up greater fortunes. As families will die out unless there are children, so their prosperity will vanish unless it makes others more prosperous also. In talking with labor, preach the same doctrines, making clear that if prosperity can be distributed, so depression and hardship must be distributed also; that as capital cannot save itself unless it devises a plan which will save labor, so labor cannot save itself unless it devises a plan which will save capital.

In discussing international matters, fall back upon these same fundamental principles. If admitting that military preparedness may be a necessity until the economic causes of war are removed, yet fearlessly preach that battleships, submarines, and aeroplanes are merely like plasters stuck on to the body of a sick man who needs a surgical operation. They may be better than nothing, but they do not go to the source of the matter. The only permanent form of preparedness is in devising a plan which will provide security and opportunity for other nations; and our nation will continue safely to develop only as some economic inter-nation is organized which will provide equal opportunity for the people of all nations.

Of course this movement does not appeal to certain rich capitalists who are opposed to the spirit of democracy, as to them the idea of a world federation has the ear-marks of socialism. Being a practical plan, it also does not appeal to manufacturers of armaments, who, by the way, have always upheld the Hague Court in its efforts to humanize war. However, if properly presented, such a plan must appeal to the great middle class, who are the ones that are obliged to do the fighting when war actually comes and who must ultimately pay the taxes.

If any one nation gains a decided victory in the present war, that nation will dictate the terms of peace, and will endeavor to protect her victory by further armaments. Although Germany may be crushed, yet the probabilities are that the German people will quickly revive, as did France after the Franco-Prussian war. In either case, the result would be that the old conflict would continue as in the past. Nations would still be obliged to spend huge sums on armaments and navies, and this would be especially true of this country.

If, however, after the nations have been fighting for a year longer, the armies and navies are in approximately the same position as at present, there is good reason to believe that the nations may voluntarily get together on some plan which will neutralize the seas and prevent any one nation from erecting further artificial barriers against another. If such a plan should be adopted, military expenditures would greatly de-

crease, industry and trade would receive a tremendous impetus, and the period of prosperity to follow the war should extend for a generation. Hence, it will be seen that not only is it of vital importance to American business men that the war be brought to a close as soon as possible, but it is even more imperative that the result shall be a draw. Then nations may see that nothing can be gained by fighting, and they may be forced, from sheer exhaustion, to unite on some better plans.

Most business people realize that such a result must come sometime. There is no logical reason why any one nation should control the world's trade. Although it may be for the interest of this country to have England win rather than Germany, it would be far better for us if the seas were neutralized and the trade of the world under the joint protection of all nations.

Whether this war will be the means of bringing about international control of international commerce I do not know. I believe that it may, if we will recognize that there are real economic causes of war which must be eliminated before there can be world peace; that these causes will be eliminated only as each nation is willing to give up something for the general good, and teach that, if such is for the general good, there must be an ultimately beneficial reaction to ourselves; that only through economic co-operation with other nations can our own interests finally be fully developed and protected.

WAR, RELIGION, AND PREPAREDNESS

The following interesting articles are in answer to a letter reading as follows:

"THE ADVOCATE OF PEACE, the established organ of the peace movement in America, is seeking to gather the opinions of a few leaders of religious thought upon the question of war, as it affects the United States in the present crisis.

"Would you be willing to write for us, to appear in connection with other similar articles in an early number, a brief statement of your views upon what should be the attitude of the church and religion toward war in general and toward the issue of increasing military preparedness in the United States in particular?

"THE ADVOCATE OF PEACE would especially appreciate the courtesy of your co-operation in this undertaking."

These articles are the first two received. It is expected that others in the series will follow in future numbers.—
THE EDITOR.

By RABBI STEPHEN S. WISE

Of the Free Synagogue, New York City

THERE ought not to be, and there ought never to have been, any question as to the attitude of religion toward war. It must be pointed out that the church and religion are used as interchangeable terms; but unhappily they have not been interchangeable things. What the attitude of religion toward war is we know. Religion and war cannot coexist. If religion is to be, war must go. When war is, religion goes. There is no room in the world for a religious attitude of the human soul and the fact of war, for war means everything that religion opposes. It means lust, brutality, slaughter, covetousness, pitilessness, and all the other fiendish things whose resurrection from hell religion ought to make impossible.

One need not go back to the inspiration of Isaiah nor yet to the unmistakable meaning of the words of Jesus in order to ascertain what is the attitude of religion

By RABBI SAMUEL SCHULMAN

Of Temple Beth-El, New York City

IT WAS perfectly natural that the great world-war should profoundly influence American policy. It has brought home to the imagination of the American people that America can, in no sense, be longer considered as dwelling in isolation. It is bound together with the ends of the earth by a hundred ties. The realization of this has naturally quickened thought, and what was regarded, only a year ago, by men in the highest authoritative position, as a manifestation of hysteria, is now recognized as the most serious problem which the American people has to face—the necessity for adequate military preparation for the defense of American institutions and American power, prestige, and influence in the international world council.

Only experts are entitled to give advice as to just how much preparedness we need. Those whose function it is, in however limited a way, to influence public opinion,